

TOWN OF WELAKA



MARCH 2020

Waste Pro

March 2nd – Garbage, Recycle
March 9th – Garbage, Recycle, Yard Trash
March 16th – Garbage, Recycle
March 23rd – Garbage, Recycle, Yard Trash
March 30th – Garbage, Recycle
 Please call Waste Pro if you have any questions at 328-5445.

Public Meetings

March 10th, Tues – Zoning Board at 5:30 p.m.; Code Board at 5:45 p.m., Town Council at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall. For more information call Town Hall at 386-467-9800.
March 12th, Thurs – Fire Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Fire Station.

March Meter Readings



March meter readings will begin: Wednesday, March 18th.

PLEASE HELP CONSERVE WATER!



Remember: Water bill payments can be made anytime of the day or night, even on weekends, by using the "Utility Payment" drop box at the top of the stairs at Town Hall.

Clip This



The Town of Welaka Utility Department is available for water and sewer problems 24 hours a day at 467-8677.
TDD 800/955-8771

Special days this month:

Tuesday, March 17th – Election Day



Friday, March 20th – Swearing in Ceremony @ 7:00 p.m.



Sunday, March 8th – Daylight Saving Time



Tuesday, March 17th – St. Patrick's Day



Thursday, March 19th – Spring Begins



United Methodist Church
Pancake Breakfast \$4
 Pancakes, Sausage, Bacon, Orange Juice and Coffee!



Saturday, March 7th
7:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

From the Mayor:



GOLF CARTS

Again, last month, we brought Golf Cart Regulations to your attention. Emphasized again the privileges are to be enjoyed. Where's your golf cart in the Town of Welaka? At any given period of time we find golf carts roaming CR 309 and 308B which has been told to all. I know you cross these two County highways at given crossings. Do not allow yourself to be stopped by the Sheriff's department. As previously stated, we are the only legally recognized golf cart community in Putnam County.

As such, we do not want to come to the point where we foul this up for everybody. Make sure you cross where you're supposed to. Sometimes it takes a little ingenuity to figure out how to get from point A to B but it can be done.

Another thing is, you must register these golf carts at Town Hall so we can see your Windshield Sticker, giving proof that you have insurance and that you are operating in the guidelines of the ordinance. Innumerable people become upset when it is brought to their attention that you cannot be on the streets of town without having registered your golf cart.

Please come in, it's only going to cost you \$25 for that annual sticker and will probably cost you in the neighborhood of \$70 to have full/liability coverage insurance. Most of the Homeowners Policies do have a provision for this figure that you can obtain insurance. Undoubtedly over the last few years we have become accustomed to the convenience and enjoyment of being able to use golf carts for our betterment here in town. We have had several wonderful events. We always seem to get a fantastic amount for the

parade around Christmas time and many folks like to decorate for July 4th as well. It's just a lot of fun to be able to have this enjoyment. Don't make the Code Enforcement Officer or Chief Mike become ticket writers and take the joy away. All it takes is one or two people flaunting unlicensed vehicles to create a great deal of angst in the minds of Council Members, your Police Department and your Code Enforcement. Just remember, it's too good of a thing, don't ruin it. Just please smarten up.



SPRINGFEST

We had another super Springfest. Friday was a little chilly but fairly good crowd, better than in some past years. We moved our Chili Contest to Saturday and did raise the entries to five this year. Friday was a little hard for several of these people in the past, but it all worked well together. We had the Chili Contest in the late morning and the Cake and Pie Contest in the afternoon. Sweet Treats was with us yet again, who we enjoy every year.

OTHER ENTITIES WITH US

We believe the Lion's Club has potential candidates that they will be able to create a group here in Welaka. It sure would be nice to have this organization as they do so much good, especially when it comes to eyesight. If you haven't yet made your intentions known, please do because it just will be a blessing to us here in town.

As usual, we were blessed with our hometown man. Kim Hilton with so much history here in town was with us on Saturday to be enjoyed by many. It really, really worked out nicely as it always does when Kim is in the house.

The weather Saturday was picture book perfect and as such, the crowd was larger than we anticipated and everything went so well. Some people were a little careless in the way they

drove through town but that was taken care of. Chief Mike had that under control. Just some days you better slow down so a crowd doesn't get hurt. Only takes a minute or two longer and keeps the atmosphere safer. We will be planning maybe a couple of new suggestions that were given to us this year, but before next year we will attempt to, as always, upgrade just slightly. It's a nice way to enjoy the end of winter.



FOOD DISTRIBUTION

We were fortunate enough with the February Distribution, by properly handling the pickup and the coordination that was created. Meat, fresh produce and other items were received. Quantity was considerably greater than January and we learned probably our distribution will be better for March. Currently March 19th will be the day of distribution. Remember if you want to volunteer or help with input be sure to contact Harriet at 631-764-2308. There is a lot of paperwork involved. As such, we are grateful for the organization of this each month. We all have to take care of each other and this is a wonderful way. Making life a little better for those in our community. Get involved! It does take help and we are proud that we do have this. If you have questions, again, contact Harriet. She can always use help so let's make sure we make this a long-term objective.



HOW DO RUMORS START?

Several months ago, FDLE, most of you know made available funding for a new police vehicle. Buying under the state guidelines requires that you either advertise and take multiple bids or you find a contract that has been approved by the state or an organization of the state that you might be able to tack on

and use. This is the way it went down. The new police vehicle was paid for by FDLE. We located the Florida Sheriff's association bid for vehicles and were allowed to purchase off of that bid. This was handled extremely well by Chief Mike, no hitches, quite a little paperwork, but it progressed rapidly. Fast forward we find that our F250 Utility Pickup has some major engine needs. All alternatives were checked. The pickup was over 12 years old. We knew it had an engine problem that wasn't it. It was going to haunt us. It would cost \$7,000 or \$8,000 locally or \$12,000 at the dealers to replace it and then still have a 12-year-old vehicle susceptible to more critical situations in the near future.

I felt that since Chief Mike had done such a good job with the police vehicle that I asked him if he would help walk us through what was finally decided, purchasing a replacement pickup in order that we had one new vehicle that was capable of leaving town and knowing that it'd be back. Somehow this simple attitude of using the state Sheriff bid brought about the remark. Why does the Chief need a second pickup by someone who was in the council room? This came across that we were buying another pickup for the Chief. One, it was the convenience of the Chief having just recently done this and he was able to help us guide the utility department. A replacement vehicle has a 75,000-mile Warranty capable of performing the services that we need. What our desire was, that we have a vehicle with a utility service body on it. We had previously, bought a new utility body which we had intended to put on the 12-year-old truck.

However, the misrepresentation of the council discussion was that somehow, we were yet buying another truck for the police department. Even confined to a council meeting, a rumor did emanate, which fortunately was killed before the council meeting was over. We have to be so careful to make sure that rumors are not created, which are

misleading and that create false conclusions. Please as we've said and as I say over and over again, do not hesitate to ask a council member if you think something is not quite well understood. Bring it to our attention and we will try and make sure that the truth is known. We just do not need to move in the future with false information.



HISTORY

Mike MeHaffey brought to my attention that someone had obtained his email address from Otisville New York. Three generations ago, their great grandparents had been members of the Welaka Community. They had boxes and boxes of pictures of that era. Would we be interested? Certainly, we would be. Mike told them and as a result yet another source of some of our history be obtained and retained. Further members in the community have searched their closets and come forward with more historic data.

Welaka continues to attempt to create a permanent location in order that this material might be displayed. It might be brought to the public. Maybe we can have another volume or two of the historic pictures of the area. We're currently proud and pleased that we do have at least our one volume collection by Nancy Alvers here at Town Hall. Historic committee meets each month to move forward in the gaining of previous happenings. If you are interested, make sure to come forth.

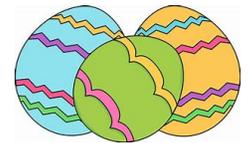
CURRENT ELECTION

After we had changed your location to vote, it changed a date this year to the Presidential Preferential Election. We had moved forward to March 17th as our date for our municipal election. The incumbents, were the only candidates. It was not necessary that we have the election on this date, the 17th however is the National Preferential Primary. We also changed the date of swearing

in our candidates in order to comply with the charter as fully as possible. March 20th Friday will be a special meeting with the swearing in of the two council members. This will occur at 7:00 PM. We again hope that Tim Smith will be with us for this ceremony.

COME TOGETHER REUNION

The reunion will be held on May 15th and 16th. The office is working with the event organizer in order that we resolve any previous situations and that it runs smoothly. It is a come together reunion. Many of our citizens here in town are very proud of their background. Whether they moved away from home or otherwise, this outing does bring back many of our younger people. Even some of our older people that have moved away from us. It just is a weekend that you can get together and Reminisce and enjoy. We will work closely and hopefully this is the event that everyone desires.



EASTER

This year Easter will be held with a Sunrise Service on the Methodist Church lawn. The town always provides some aluminum bleachers. Make sure that if you attend, you bring a towel because generally there's moisture in the air that's collected on the bleachers. Doesn't hurt to wipe the condensation off before you use them. Without Easter we would have nothing to look forward to.

DOWNTOWN PARK

You will have noticed over the last few months, we have had to restrict the showers. We have found out that we have people traveling 10 -12 miles to take a shower. We did not realize the situation. It only takes a few people to destroy a good thing.

In the latter part of February, someone attempted to destroy the restrooms,

which were being left open for use at the Downtown Park. Destroyed toilets, defecated walls, made the sanitary situation beyond imaginable. As a result, we have tightened control even more. If we see attempted improvement, we will relax slightly. It is a shame that a wonderful park here with tennis, basketball, children's playground equipment, and pavilion, just a wonderful place to relax, has to be so desecrated. What is wrong with some people's attitude toward these facilities? Is there no shame among us? We were so fortunate that we have had so much in our recreation. We are placing surveillance cameras on this park. Initially we are going to have to put surveillance cameras on our compound to avoid tires being thrown at the compound. Don't be afraid to somehow let Chief Mike or the Council know if parties are doing this. This is not who we are and the way we treat this, in most instances. If people from outside of town are doing this, don't be afraid to help us protect all of our recreational areas.

PASSINGS AND LOSSES

During the last few months, we have had a few losses that I want to bring to your attention. We have missed in the previous months of making sure we took note. This is by far not the only ones that we have lost, but just a little bit of history, Aliene Horning, Bull's mother passed. Those of us that got to know her and the family realize these were Yankees from the Tug Hill Plateau use to a couple of hundred inches of snow a year that found enjoyment here in Welaka. Several members of the family followed.

Well actually we had a colony from this upstate New York locality here, relatives, friends, others, etc. Everyone thinks that Bull is a native Floridian, anything but, he had to be yanked out of a snowdrift to be brought to Florida. Anyone that's never gone through a winter in upstate New York on the downwind side of the Great Lakes do not realize how deep snow can get. If you don't believe me, just ask Bull

sometime and he will tell you why he is here and not there.

Charlie Yarbrough served the town for years in the maintenance department. At any given time, you almost had to be named Charlie to get a job here, from the police chief to the utility's chief, to the employees. I guess we have lost about our last Charlies. Still we have a member or two retired, but no longer do we have directly employed a Charlie. Charlie worried greatly about Jefferson Smith park. In his latter days he was more or less our eyes and ears for watching over Welaka. We got all the way to the point that we even had electricity in our pavilion. Charlie was unique and we really miss him. Sandy Perkins, just won't seem the same without Sandy. We lost her New Year's Day. Tenaciously, she survived an extended period of time in physical discomfort. Never giving up until almost the bitter end. Sadly, New Year's Day she passed.

BYRNE GRANT

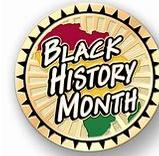
We are going to have some cameras around town. Maybe it will be like the school buses used to be that everyone at least had the ability to have a camera. Kids never knew whether there was a camera in their bus or not, but they knew that there was a feasibility of one watching you. We tried to be careful about how we maintained the appearance, and we have tried with a simple sign, no dumping. Yet, we have piles of tires, just because we remove our tires they build up. We do not want tires. They cost us money to remove. We've become the dumping ground for our town. Tires are treated the same way that cats are, dump them in the wild in Welaka. Well folks, we aren't going to do this anymore. You won't know when and what day the camera is there, whether it's there permanently, once a week, but we are going to maintain a better-looking area in our compound. You can take your tires to the landfill, or you can take them down to Huntington, but we are going to make sure that we do everything we can to

make sure that you do not take them to the compound.



CLEAN UP

During the month of March, we will attempt to have a spring cleanup, as previously stated do not pile your storm debris, or trees, etc. haphazardly on the right-a-way. Properly stacked and presented, we will remove the accumulation of the last few months. If you have questions on how to do it, how to present it, make sure you call Town Hall. We are fortunate that we have the equipment and it is one of those things that we do to make everybody just a little happier, keep things a little neater, and a nice appearance. Those of us who live here the entire month, this will be brought forth to you. Just let us know if you have questions. Let us know so that we can plan on the pickup.



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

On the 22nd we had a chilly, cold day. The last few years, we have celebrated black history at Jefferson Smith park. No one ever left hungry. Everyone realized how much history there was in Town. How many people have served our country in military service? How independent and how independently we survived the last 50 or 60 years.

How things have progressed. Pride in being in Town. Pride in being members of family. Just a great day. Was enjoyed by those of us that attended. Had a wonderful time. The weather this year, basically forced us to use the dining room at St. James AME. It really did bless us. In fact, the closeness and the reminiscing were the finest that I had seen since this concept of Black History Day. Those of you who did not attend missed out on fantastic walks over 60 years of life here in Welaka. I have

been blessed the last 25 years. Councilman Washington this day recapped the 60 years that he spent here in Town. No written itinerary, nothing but from the heart. Councilman Washington walked through his love affair with Welaka from family, to municipality, to his own inner convictions.

We wandered with him for a good period of time. Even some of the things I did not know were brought to light. Any of you that attended, that might have recorded this period of time of his reminiscing, please let us know here in Town Hall. This was far, far beyond, and needs for a permanent record to be made. I have had a couple people come forward. We do have pictures of a heartfelt time that Jun discussed his life over 60 years. Always moving forward, sometimes a little slower than others, but always moving forward, never being ashamed. As a result, creating a history here in Town that is important for the last 60 years is our entire history of this municipality. It was so heartfelt. If you did have a tear in your eye when he finished, or if you didn't have pride that you were a member of Welaka, you just didn't get it. A few people such as this have certainly made this a Town what it is today. That uniqueness that we so hard worked for to maintain. God bless you Jun. Where would we have been without you?



**TOWN OF WELAKA
ZONING BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020
@ 5:30 P.M.**

WELAKA TOWN HALL

1. The meeting was called to order by Finch at 5:30 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Kevin Finch – present, Allen Rusek – present, Lenore Toole – absent, Harriet Vanslyke – present, Les Thomas – absent, and Town Attorney Allen Scott – absent.
3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of January 14, 2020. Finch asked if any deletions, corrections or additions – there were none. Rusek made a motion to accept Minutes of Meeting of January 14, 2020, second by Vanslyke. Motion carried 3-0.
4. Old Business: none
5. New Business: Finch questioned where we are at with the short-term rental regulations. Scott stated that the State is regulating certain areas already. Sands stated that we need to address it due to the influx on our sewer system in the Harbor. Finch stated by the next meeting, that he would like a proposed first reading of an ordinance for regulations for short-term rentals.
6. Request to Speak: none
7. Audience Participation: none
8. Vanslyke made a motion to adjourn at 5:48 p.m., second by Rusek. Motion carried 3-0.



**TOWN OF WELAKA
CODE ENFORCEMENT MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020
@ 5:45 P.M.**

WELAKA TOWN HALL

1. The meeting was called to order by Finch at 5:45 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Kevin Finch - present, Allen Rusek – present, Lenore Toole – absent, Harriet Vanslyke – present, Les

Thomas – absent, and Town Attorney Allen Scott – present.

3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of January 14, 2020. Finch asked if any deletions, corrections or additions – Greg Wilson instead of Gary. Rusek made a motion to accept the Minutes of Meeting of January 14, 2020 as written, second by Vanslyke. Motion carried 3-0.

4. Old Business: 1007 Front Street – Trail Boss: Scott stated that an issue that has never come up, you the Code Board passed, and the Council approved the authorization of litigation to enforce on fines. Part of the public records and meetings law allows the government agency, Code Enforcement and Council, to maintain Attorney client privilege with relations with any matter under litigation. Scott stated that if a guy were to come forward and make a proposal at this point, we are past Code Enforcement, now the only way there is a resolution is either by judgement of court or some kind of settlement, and if he proposed “x,y,z”, that proposal is brought before the Town Council. Scott stated that matters of what is going on should not be public record, and at this point generally my understanding is that this guy has finally got a permit, engineering and none has anything to do with Attorney, informational purpose the man is finally concerned about where this is going. Scott stated that when the time is right to provide litigation status, he will bring to the proper board. It will be a closed meeting with a court reporter. Sands stated that Trail Boss has to get a DEP permit, since it isn't a single hook-up. Finch motioned that he requests an update on all other sewer hook-ups. Notice them again, and keep the pressure on. Finch asked McDaniel to generate the list of noncompliance, notice to appear or cause as to why they haven't complied at next meeting. Vanslyke made a motion regarding Finch's guideline for next meeting, second by Rusek. Motion carried 3-0.

5. New Business: none
6. Request to Speak: none
7. Audience Participation:
8. Rusek made a motion to adjourn at 6:15 p.m., second by Vanslyke. Motion carried 3-0.

**TOWN OF WELAKA
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020
@ 6:30 P.M.
WELAKA TOWN HALL**

1. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sands at 6:30 p.m.
2. Invocation was given by Finch.
3. Pledge of Allegiance led by Washington.
4. Roll Call: Mayor Gordon Sands - present, Councilman Willie Washington - present, Councilman Jamie Watts - present, Councilwoman Jessica Finch - present, Councilwoman Marianne Milledge - present, and Town Attorney Allen Scott - present.
5. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of January 14, 2020. Sands asked if any deletions, corrections or additions - there were none. Watts motioned to approve Minutes of Meeting of January 14, 2020, second by Finch. Motion carried 5-0.
6. Request to Speak: none
7. James Moore: Audit Presentation Fiscal Year October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019- Brendan McKittrick, CPA, Senior Manager gave an oral presentational regarding the audit for the year ended September 30, 2019. Required Communications: Significant Estimates - Use of assets, Utility receivable allowance and FEMA receivable. Financial Statements Disclosure - Restricted assets (Better Place \$142K and Centennial \$5K in the General Fund) (\$2K debt service and \$171K Utility expansion in Utility Fund) and Long-term debt (Note 7). Significant Difficulties Performing Audit, Disagreements with Management - None. Audit Adjustments Recorded - None. Audit Reports: Report on Financial Statements (pages 1-2)- Unmodified Opinion/Clean Opinion. Report on Internal Control and Compliance (pages 33-34) - Significant deficiency for preparation of Financial Statements. Florida Auditor General Reports (pages 35-37) - No Findings. Financial Highlights: Revenues - \$1.33M no significant changes from prior year. Expenses - \$1.55M (\$66K increase mainly due to street capital improvements). Government Net Position - \$2.13M (Decrease of \$127K). Invested in Capital Assets - \$1M for streets and park improvements.

- Restricted - Better Place and Centennial \$146K: Consistent. Unrestricted - \$981K (Decrease \$63K). Business-type Net Position - \$5.72M (Decrease of \$88K due to Investment of Capital Assets, Water and Sewer Plant. Invested in capital assets - \$4.3M. Restricted - Debt service and Utility improvements \$172K. Unrestricted - \$1.24M (Increase \$59K for infrastructure of Utility). General Fund - \$929,007 total fund balance. (Unassigned fund balance 136% of current expenditures. The average is 16.7%. The Town exceeds average. Watts motioned to accept the audit for year ending September 30, 2019, second by Willie. Motion carried 5-0.
8. Linda Myers: Proclamation- not in attendance.
 9. Short-term Rentals: Sands stated that the Code Board discussed this a little bit this afternoon. Sands stated that the House of Representatives in Tallahassee brought for the Short-term rentals from the residential to the legislative. Sands stated that we sent letters to protest, in regard to this, some to our house representatives. Sands stated that the state does everything in their power to get rid of home rule. Sands stated that we are staying very close with Florida League of Cities, we are trying to move forward with our Short-term rental restrictions.
 10. F250 Vehicle: Sands stated it's been since 2008 since utilities had a new vehicle. We have a 250 pickup that has a hiccup in the engine. Sands stated that we received quotes from Rich Chlarson for \$7,000, and Beck looked at it for \$12,000 for work. Sands stated that he asked Chief to assist in a new vehicle since he did such a good job with the \$54,000 police truck. We have a new utility body for 3,000, and we will put the body on the truck The Council reviewed 3 bids on vehicles to purchase. Watts made a motion for consideration the 2019 Ford F350 from Beck Chrysler for \$33,965.00 with the warranty, second by Washington. Motion carried 5-0. Milledge stated the dump truck is not in good condition either.
 11. Code and Zoning Recommendations: 1007 Front Street- Sands stated that during the Code meeting it was discussed. They are physically up to date with what happened, a phone call with property

- owner, building department received engineer drawings last week for this project at Trail Boss, DEP needs to be involved (individuals hooking up don't need DEP permit, when you take a business with consolidating 7- 12 septic's, you need a DEP permit).
12. Utility Matters: 292 Maxwell Drive- no discussion.
 13. Town Matters:
Mayor Sands Report: Sands presented the S.E. Cline Construction proposal for the 8" main on Front Street that has to be reworked to 4" main, and quantity 4, 90's in it. The proposal is for \$12,671. Finch made a motion to accept the proposal from S.E. Cline Construction for \$12,671 for the repair of the 4" watermain, second by Milledge. Sands stated that there will be a boiled water notice 2 days prior to the repair. Sands stated that we will have the Swearing-In Ceremony for Finch and Washington on March 20th at 7 p.m.
Councilwoman Milledge Report: none
Councilwoman Finch Report: Website- Finch stated that the website is progressing, and slowly pulling info from old website.
Councilman Washington Report: none
Councilman Watts Report: none
 14. Audience Participation: none
 15. Police Matters: none
 16. Attorney Matters: none
 17. Watts made a motion to adjourn at 7:34 p.m., second by Milledge. Motion carried 5-0.



SCOUT ME IN

**NEW Leadership
BOYS AND GIRLS
Kindergarten to 5th Grade
Emmanuel Episcopal Church,
Welaka
Mondays
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Call Janis Brown-Stallings for
more information.**



Friends of Welaka will be participating in the annual Keep Putnam Beautiful Countywide Cleanup on Saturday, March 14th from

8 a.m. - until approximately noon.

Additional volunteers are needed and we will strictly be

picking up trash in the Welaka area.

If interested, please contact Jessica Finch @386-546-9859.

We need volunteers from each neighborhood, if possible, as we will be dividing the volunteers into groups to tackle manageable portions of the Town.

Work gloves and closed toed shoes needed to participate.

Meet at the Town Hall Pavilion between 7:00-7:30 a.m.

Coffee, juice, pastries and fruit will be provided.

We'll meet between 7:00-7:30 a.m. at the Town Hall Pavilion.



STUDY GROUP

All Grades
Welaka Woman's Club
Every Thursday
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Tutoring and Reading

Sponsored by Friends of Welaka



JOIN US

for a
Friends of Welaka
Fundraiser

St. Patrick's Day
Welaka Lodge & Resort

Tuesday, March 17th
5 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Full Irish Feast



Buy Tickets at Welaka Lodge

Or call:

Jessica 386-467-7171

Laurie 561-267-7466

Lion's Club

1st Meeting

Date: March 3rd

Time: Noon

Where: Shrimp R Us



Welaka Springfest 2020

The
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place Saturday @ 2:00 p.m. The Pie Contest took place Saturday @ 2:00 p.m. Thanks to all the judges!!!!
Thank you for the donations for the cake, pie and chili contest winners to the following Town Businesses: Renegades,
Long's Log Cabin, Blessings and Shrimp 'R Us and More, and River Pub.

